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LEADERSHIP STYLES OF PRINCIPALS AND SUPERVISORS: AN APPLICATION OF THE GRID TECHNIQUE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated leadership styles of principals and instructional supervisors as they performed specific supervisory tasks. Twelve supervisory competency areas were investigated. Of the 238 classroom teachers participating in the study, 129 identified principals and 109 identified instructional supervisors as the person responsible for providing supervision for them. Analysis of data compares principals to supervisors on the leadership dimensions of concern for task and concern for people in each competency area. Significant differences in leadership behavior were found only in the supervisory competency area of curriculum change. Application of the Leadership Grid seems to reveal that teachers view supervisors as being more concerned for both task and people than are principals.

LEADERSHIP STYLES OF PRINCIPALS AND SUPERVISORS: AN APPLICATION OF THE GRID TECHNIQUE

Recent years have been trying ones for educational leaders and the prospects for improvement in the years to come are not very bright. The educational leader--superintendent, principal, supervisor--is the leader of a school system, school or a program and, as such, is responsible for the outcomes.

Of all the major national efforts to effect significant change in public education during the past 20 years, not one has addressed the issue of leadership. There have been major, nation-wide efforts to design and implement new curricula, and such programs as Right to Read, Career Education, and expanded educational opportunities for the handicapped. We continue to give credence to such cliches as the "principal sets the tone of his school," "the school reflects the personality and values of the leader," and "the principal or supervisor is the instructional leader." Yet, if students do not learn, we resort to the cliches that "where there is no learning there is no teaching" to explain the lack of student achievement in basic skill areas. Burton and Brueckner[1] state that: "...the primary function of supervisors of all types is leadership." Educators need to give serious study to the field of leadership, building on the foundations laid by behavioral and social scientists and the application of their work in business and industrial organizations.

Much of the history of education revolves around the lives, activities and thoughts of educational leaders. Yet, it is necessary to go beyond the field of education to find a body of research on leadership. The literature on leadership up to about 1950 is concerned primarily with

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[1]William H. Burton and Leo J. Brueckner. Supervision: A Social Process. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1955. p. 5.

identifying and analyzing the traits which were supposed to distinguish effective from ineffective leaders. In the 50's research emphasis shifted from personality traits to a blending of traits with leadership situations.[2] Stogdill's[3] comprehensive reviews of the literature from 1933-1947 and from 1947-1974, summarized in Table 1, and a study of doctoral dissertations from 1968-1974 by Firth[4] further illustrate this shift in research focus.

Insert Table 1 here

Consideration, Structure, and the Leadership Grid

The leadership dimensions of consideration and initiating structure have been important concepts in the study of leadership for almost thirty years. Whenever educational leaders examine their responsibilities, the two most important considerations are the tasks (goals and objectives) to be accomplished and the people (teachers, students, resource personnel, parents) with and through whom they must work.

Halpin[5] refers to initiating structure as the leader's behavior in delineating the relationship between himself and members of the work group, and in endeavoring to establish well-defined patterns of organization, channels of communication, and methods of procedure. While consideration refers to behavior indicative of friendship, mutual trust, respect, and warmth in the relationship between the leader and members of the staff. Halpin used the Leadership Quadrant to illustrate the

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[2]John K. Hemphill. Situational Factors in Leadership. Columbus Ohio: The Ohio State University, 1949.

[3]Ralph M. Stodgill. Handbook of Leadership: A Survey of Theory and Research. New York: The Free Press, 1974.

[4]Gerald R. Firth. "Theories of Leadership: Where Do We Stand," Educational Leadership. 33:327-331, February, 1976.

[5]Andrew W. Halpin. Theory and Research in Administration. New York: Macmillan, 1966.

Table 1. Stogdill's Summary of Characteristics of Leaders as Presented in the Literature, 1933 - 1947

Characteristics from 1933 - 47	Characteristics from 1947 -74
1. General characteristics a. Capacity b. Achievement c. Responsibility d. Participation e. Status f. Situation	1. Strong drive for responsibility and task completion 2. Vigor and persistence in pursuit of goals 3. Venturesomeness and originality in problem solving 4. Drive to exercise initiative in social situations 5. Self-confidence and sense of personal identity 6. Willingness to accept consequences of decision and action 7. Readiness to absorb interpersonal stress 8. Willingness to tolerate frustration and delays 9. Ability to influence other person's behavior 10. Capacity to structure social interaction systems to the purpose at hand
2. Average person occupying a leadership position exceeded the average member of his group in: a. Intelligence b. Scholarship c. Dependability d. Sociability e. Initiative f. Persistence g. Knowing how to get things done h. Self confidence i. Alertness to and insight into situations j. Cooperativeness j. Popularity l. Adaptability m. Verbal facility	

concept of leadership style[6]. The Leadership Quadrant and leadership styles identified are shown in Figure 1.

Insert Figure 1 here

Blake and Mouton[7] developed a Managerial Grid to identify and plot the leadership dimensions of initiating structure (concern for task) and consideration (concern for people). Figure 2 shows the five basic leadership styles and their position on the Grid.

Insert Figure 2 here

The four leadership styles identified by Halpin are basically the same as those of Blake and Mouton. Blake and Mouton's 1,1 style compares with the leader in Quadrant 4; their 1,9 style with the leader in Quadrant 3; their 9,1 style with Quadrant 2; and their 9,9 style with Quadrant 1. Halpin does not, of course, recognize the compromise, Blake and Mouton's 5,5, style.

Application of Leadership Theory in Education

The application of leadership theory is still in its early stages. Firth's study[8] shows an increasing interest in the study and application of leadership theory to administration, curriculum, instruction, and supervision. As it might be expected, more research has been done in the area of administration and least in the areas of supervision and instruction.

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[6]Ibid. Also, see his The Leadership Behavior of School Superintendents. Midwest Administration Center, University of Chicago: Chicago, 1959 and "The Leadership Behavior and Leadership Ideology of Educational Administrators and Aircraft Commanders," Harvard Educational Review. 25:18-32, 1955,

[7]Robert R. Blade and Jane S. Mouton. The Managerial Gird: Key Orientation for Achieving Production Through People. Houston, Tx: Gulf Publishing Co., 1964.

[8]Firth, op. cit., p. 330.

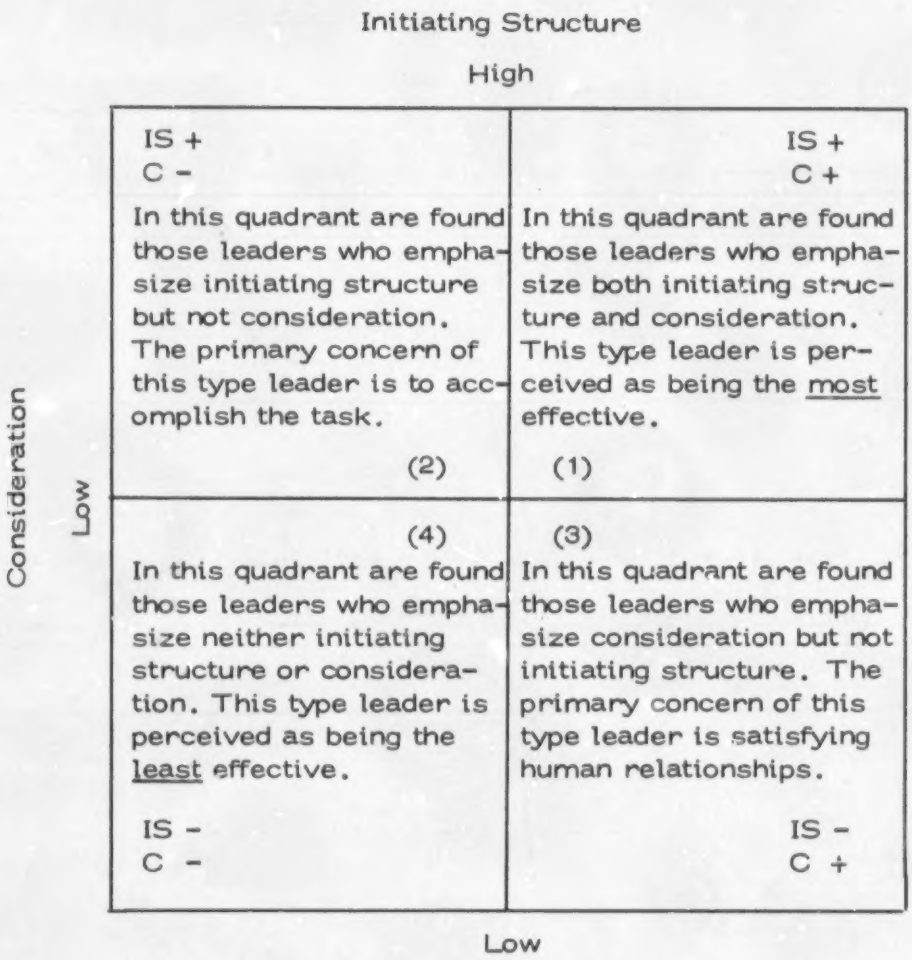
Initiating Structure
High
Consideration
Low
IS +
C -
In this quadrant are found those leaders who emphasize initiating structure but not consideration. The primary concern of this type leader is to accomplish the task.
(2)
IS +
C +
In this quadrant are found those leaders who emphasize both initiating structure and consideration. This type leader is perceived as being the most effective.
(1)
(4)
In this quadrant are found those leaders who emphasize neither initiating structure or consideration. This type leader is perceived as being the least effective.
IS -
C -
(3)
In this quadrant are found those leaders who emphasize consideration but not initiating structure. The primary concern of this type leader is satisfying human relationships.
IS -
C +
Low

Figure 1. Halpin's Leadership Quadrant

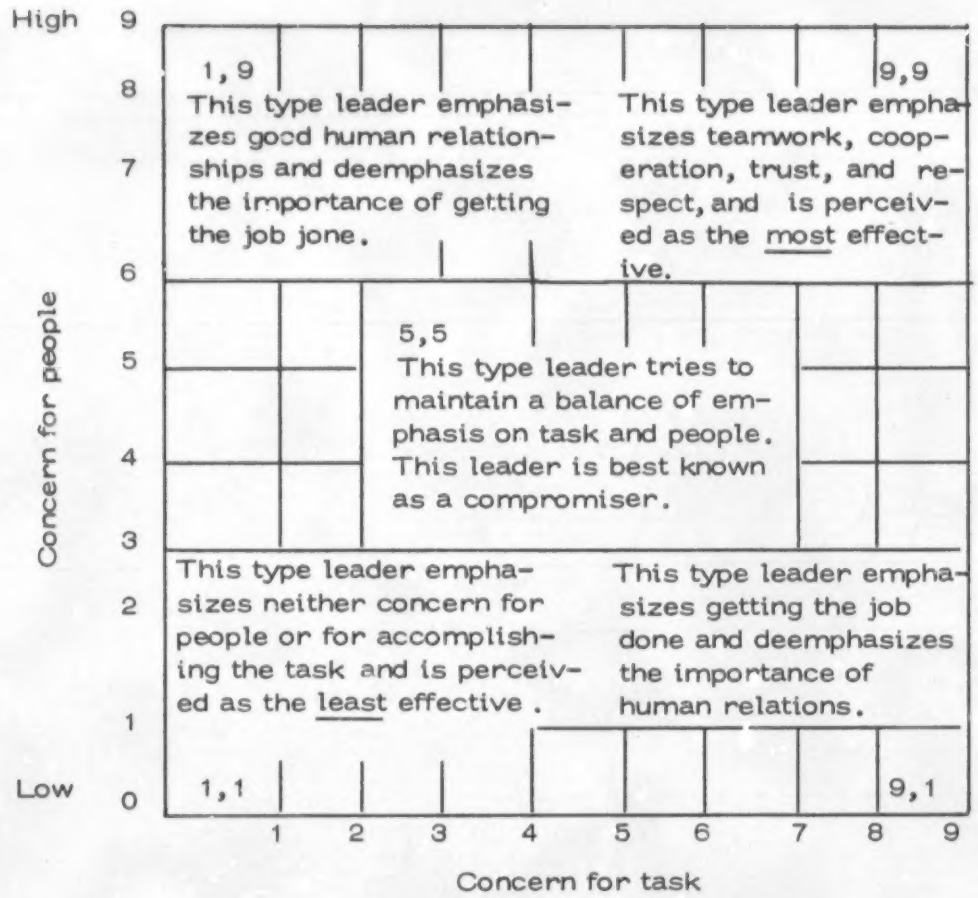
High
Low
Concern for people
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
1,9
This type leader emphasizes good human relationships and deemphasizes the importance of getting the job jone.
9,9
This type leader emphasizes teamwork, cooperation, trust, and respect, and is perceived as the most effective.
5,5
This type leader tries to maintain a balance of emphasis on task and people. This leader is best known as a compromiser.
This type leader emphasizes neither concern for people or for accomplishing the task and is perceived as the least effective .
This type leader emphasizes getting the job done and deemphasizes the importance of human relations.
1,1
9,1
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Concern for task

Figure 2. Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid

Firth concluded that the terms "...instruction, supervision, and curriculum planning appear in reference to 'leadership' only infrequently... The need for an operationally researched behavior system in supervision and instruction appears to be a priority for educational study."[9]

Table 2 provides a summary of selected studies in education using the leadership dimensions of initiating structure (concern for task) and consideration (concern for people) and a leadership grid or quadrant.

Insert Table 2 here

Purposes of Study

The purposes of this study were to:

1. Identify the leadership styles of principals and instructional supervisors.
2. Apply these leadership styles to the leadership grid.
3. Determine if supervisory position (principal or instructional supervisor) were significant variables in leadership style.

METHOD

Sample

Participants in this study were 76 male and 162 female classroom teachers (kindergarten - grade 12) enrolled in graduate supervision courses. The sample represents 11 graduate classes in seven colleges and universities in three states. The opinionnaires were administered to each class either as a group or, after explanation of purposes and directions, individuals completed the opinionnaire outside of class and returned it to the professor. Of the 238 respondents, 129 identified their principal and 109 identified an instructional supervisor as the person responsible for providing supervision.

Instrumentation

Since this research was intended to identify leadership styles exhibited by supervisory personnel as they performed specific supervisory

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[9] Ibid., p. 331.

Table 2. Summary of Selected Studies in Education using Leadership Dimensions of Concern for Task and Concern for People and Leadership Grid or Quadrant, 1955 - 1976

Researchers and Date of Research	Instrument(s) used	Focus of Research	Conclusions
Hemphill (1955)[10] *	LBDQ	Leadership styles of department heads in liberal arts colleges	Departments with high reputations were those in which chairmen were high on both leadership dimensions.
Halpin (1955)[11]	LBDQ	Leadership ideology and style of educational administrators and aircraft commanders	Significant differences in leadership ideology and style with school administrators showing greater concern for people and less for task but the most effective leaders in both groups were rated high on both dimensions.
Keys (1959)[12]	LBDQ	Expected and described leadership behavior of senior high principals as perceived by themselves, their teachers and superintendents	Close agreement with superintendents giving consistently higher ratings in their estimation of actual behavior. The most effective principals were rated high on both leadership dimensions.
Luckie (1963)[13]	LBDQ	Leadership styles of directors of instruction	The effective director of instruction could best achieve his goals by showing a higher degree of consideration for people than for task.

Table 2. Continued

Researchers and Date of Research	Instrument(s) used	Focus of Research	Conclusions
Sergiovanni, et.al.(1969)[14]	LBDQ	Relationship between perceived "ideal" leadership style of principals and need orientations of teachers	Regardless of need orientation (hygenic-oriented or motivation-oriented), teachers see the ideal principal as one who has high concern for both task and people.
Utz (1972)[15]	Principal Leadership Style Questionnaire	Leadership styles of principals	Most effective principals are those who consistently show high concern in both leadership dimensions.
Dawson, et.al. (1972)[16]	Supervisory Behavior Questionnaire, Edwards Personal Preference Schedule	Achievement of undergraduate students in general psychology classes	Students taught by professors who showed high concern for both task and people scored significantly higher on examinations.
Preston (1972)[17]	LBDQ	Leadership styles of principals in open space and traditional elementary schools	Principals in traditional schools scored significantly higher on both leadership dimensions.

Table 2. Continued

Researchers and Date of Research	Instrument(s) used	Focus of Research	Conclusions
Kunz and Hoy (1976)[18]	LBDQ and Professional Zone of Acceptance Inventory(PZAI)	Leadership styles of principals in relation to teacher's "zone of acceptance," i.e., willingness of teachers to accept principal's decisions	Principals strong on both dimensions had teachers with broadest zone of acceptance with the task dimension being most closely associated with the zone of acceptance.

*References are presented at the end of this article.

tasks, instruments such as the LBDQ were not appropriate. A review of the literature of supervision in education with particular emphasis on the competencies needed by supervisory personnel was conducted and twelve broad competency areas identified. These competency areas and the item numbers on the data collection instrument (Supervisory Leadership Behavior Questionnaire) are shown in Table 3. The twelve competency areas chosen for inclusion on the final questionnaire are similar to those identified by Harris[10] and in which a supervisor spends a great deal of time.

Insert Table 3 here

After selection of competency areas, items describing supervisory behavior in each of the areas were prepared. The stem of each item presented a specific supervisory situation, attitude or behavior, and was followed by five statements each describing one of the basic leadership styles identified by Blake and Mouton. The items were studied by university professors in the area of administration and supervision and by graduate students enrolled in supervision courses for clarity and applicability to the positions of principal and instructional supervisor. The final form consisted of 20 items.

Participants were instructed to read each item carefully and consider each statement as a possible description of their supervisor. They placed a 5 beside the statement which best described their supervisor, a 4 beside the statement which was next most like their supervisor, and continued ranking the other statements with 3 for third, 2 for fourth and 1 for fifth. Thus they placed the 1 beside the statement which was least like their supervisor. For the purpose of analysis only the statement by which the 5 was placed was considered. For example, if the respondent

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[10] Ben M. Harris, Supervisory Behavior in Education. Second Edition. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975.

Table 3. Competency Areas and Item Numbers in each Competency Area for the Supervisory Behavior Description Questionnaire

	Competency Areas	Item No's in each Competency Area
I.	Relationships	1
II.	Planning and Evaluation of Learning Materials	2, 19, 20
III.	Rules and Procedures	3
IV.	Conducting Meetings	4
V.	Handling Conflicts	5, 17
VI.	Curriculum Change	6, 16
VII.	Staffing and Orientation of Staff	7, 8
VIII.	Evaluation of Instruction	9, 15
IX.	Supervisory Behavior	10
X.	Setting Goals	11, 18
XI.	Attitudes of Teachers Towards Supervision	12
XII.	Inservice Education	13, 14

placed a 5 by the statement describing a 1,1 leadership style the choice was given a value of 1 for task and 1 for people. Or suppose the participant placed a 5 by the statement describing a 9,1 leadership style. This choice was given a value of 9 for task and 1 for people. Thus, the statements by which the respondent placed the 4, 3, 2, and 1 were ignored in the analysis.

Results

The means, standard deviations, and probability on the Supervisory Leadership Behavior Questionnaire were analyzed by using a t test for unequal group size and are shown in Table 4. The data compares principals to supervisors on the leadership dimensions of concern for task and concern for people in each of the competency areas. Significant differences were found only in the competency area of curriculum change (No. VI, Task $p < .05$; People $p < .01$). This finding reveals that teachers view their supervisors as being more concerned for both task and people than are their principals. Although this was the only competency area in which differences in leadership styles reached statistical significance, there were consistent differences in other areas. Supervisors were consistently rated higher on concern for people in all but three (III, IX, XI) of the competency areas. Principals were consistently rated higher on concern for task in all but five (II, VI, VIII, X, XII) of the competency areas. Overall, teachers perceived their instructional supervisors as being more concerned than principals for both task and people.

Data were also analyzed to determine if sex and race were significant variables in leadership styles. Since the differences did not approach significance in any competency area for either variable and no consistent pattern of responses could be detected, these data are not reported.

Insert Table 4 here

Figures 3 and 4 show the leadership styles of instructional supervisors and principals applied to the leadership grid. The points on the grid represent the mean rating on each of the competency areas shown

Table 4. Leadership Styles of Principals and Supervisors Within Selected Competency Areas

Competency Areas and Leadership Dimensions	Principal		Supervisor		
	$\overline{X}$	SD	$\overline{X}$	SD	P
I. Relationships					
Task	5.96	3.63	5.85	3.67	.682
People	6.02	3.61	6.29	3.53	.303
II. Planning and Evaluation of Learning Materials					
Task	5.91	2.57	6.30	2.61	.174
People	5.04	2.02	5.01	2.27	.814
III. Rules and Procedures					
Task	6.89	2.96	6.35	3.27	.316
People	6.58	3.13	6.13	3.35	.416
IV. Conducting Meetings					
Task	6.89	3.16	6.57	3.22	.587
People	5.09	3.69	5.69	3.52	.266
V. Handling Conflicts					
Task	7.03	2.69	6.49	3.03	.236
People	5.73	2.34	5.99	2.88	.429
VI. Curriculum Change					
Task	5.72	2.74	6.66	2.50	.023*
People	6.16	2.47	7.03	2.41	.009**
VII. Staffing and Orientation of Staff					
Task	6.53	2.06	6.44	2.12	.068
People	5.50	2.57	6.09	2.61	.195
VIII. Evaluation of Instruction					
Task	5.88	3.13	6.08	3.06	.551
People	6.32	2.77	6.48	2.91	.593

Table 4. Continued

Competency Areas and Leadership Dimensions	Principal $\bar{X}$	Principal SD	Supervisor $\bar{X}$	Supervisor SD	P
IX. Supervisory Behavior					
Task	6.48	3.46	6.10	3.68	.533
People	5.49	3.74	4.70	3.83	.155
X. Setting Goals					
Task	6.28	2.13	6.40	2.41	.882
People	5.17	2.63	5.29	3.01	.083
XI. Attitude of Teachers Toward Supervision					
Task	5.52	3.29	5.30	3.42	.530
People	5.52	3.29	5.25	3.41	.819
XII. Inservice Education					
Task	5.67	2.62	6.04	2.86	.293
People	5.91	2.85	6.48	2.89	.287

df = 2/236

*p < .05

**p < .01

in Table 3. This visual comparison shows that instructional supervisors are viewed as more nearly approaching the ideal (9,9 of Blake and Mouton's Grid or Halpin's Quadrant 1) type of leader while principals more nearly approach the 5,5 (Blake and Mouton's Grid) type leader.

Insert Figures 3 and 4 here

CONCLUSION

During the almost 30 years of research on the dimensions of task (initiating structure) and people (consideration), very few studies have focused on school personnel. Of those studies, the great majority relate to administrative roles and the positions of superintendent and principal and not instructional supervisory roles of principals or supervisors. These studies have consistently shown that leadership styles are identifiable, influenced by the situation, and the most effective leader is one who shows high concern for both task and people.

The major significance of this study lies in the results which would seem to be generalizable to the supervisory roles of principals as well as instructional supervisors in the southeastern and southwestern parts of the Nation. The leadership styles of principals and instructional supervisors were identified, applied to the leadership grid, and supervisory position was found to be a significant variable only in the competency area of curriculum change with instructional supervisors showing higher concern on both leadership dimensions. Further study is needed in determining leadership styles of instructional supervisors and the effects of leadership styles on performance in all the competency areas of instructional supervision.

Even though the mean scores on all competency areas for both principals and instructional supervisors clustered in the upper right quadrant of the 5,5 area or the 9,9 area of the grid, some individuals certainly would be considered 1,1; 1,9; and 9,1 (Quadrants 4, 2, and 3 respectively) leaders. Although it was not the purpose of this study

to determine the number of principals and instructional supervisors in each leadership category, this would be valuable information for a school district desiring to implement staff development programs in leadership. This and other studies in leadership indicate strong potential for improving the quality of leadership in public education. It seems clear that the next step should be to determine the relationship between leadership styles and student achievement in schools and school systems.

References for Table 2

[10]John K. Hemphill. "Leadership Behavior Associated with the Reputation of College Departments," The Journal of Educational Psychology. 46:385-401, November, 1955.

[11]Andrew W. Halpin. Theory and Research in Administration. New York: Macmillan, 1966.

[12]Samuel R. Keyes. A Study of Expected and Described Leader Behavior of Principals of Senior High Schools in the State of Minnesota. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University, 1959.

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[15]Robert T. Utz. "Principal Leadership Styles and Effectiveness as Perceived by Teachers," ERIC, ED 064, 1972.

[16]Jack E. Dawson, Lawrence A. Messé, and James L. Phillips. "Effects of Instructor-Leader Behavior on Student Performance," Journal of Applied Psychology. 56:369-376, 1972.

[17]Richard L. Preston. A Comparative Analysis of Learning Climate and Leader Behavior of Open Space Elementary and Traditional Elementary Schools. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, 1972.

[18]Daniel W. Kunz and Wayne Hoy. "Leadership Style of Principals and the Professional Zone of Acceptance of Teachers," Educational Administration Quarterly. 12:49-64, Fall, 1976.

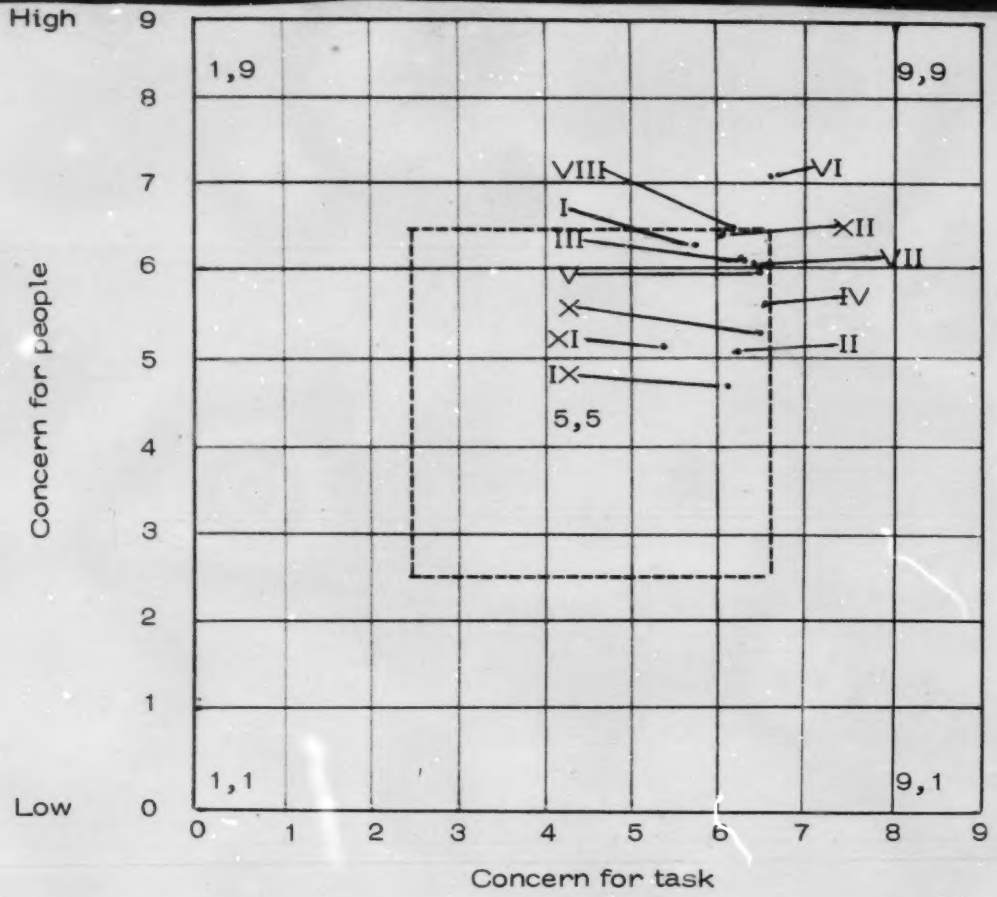

Figure 3. Leadership styles of Supervisors

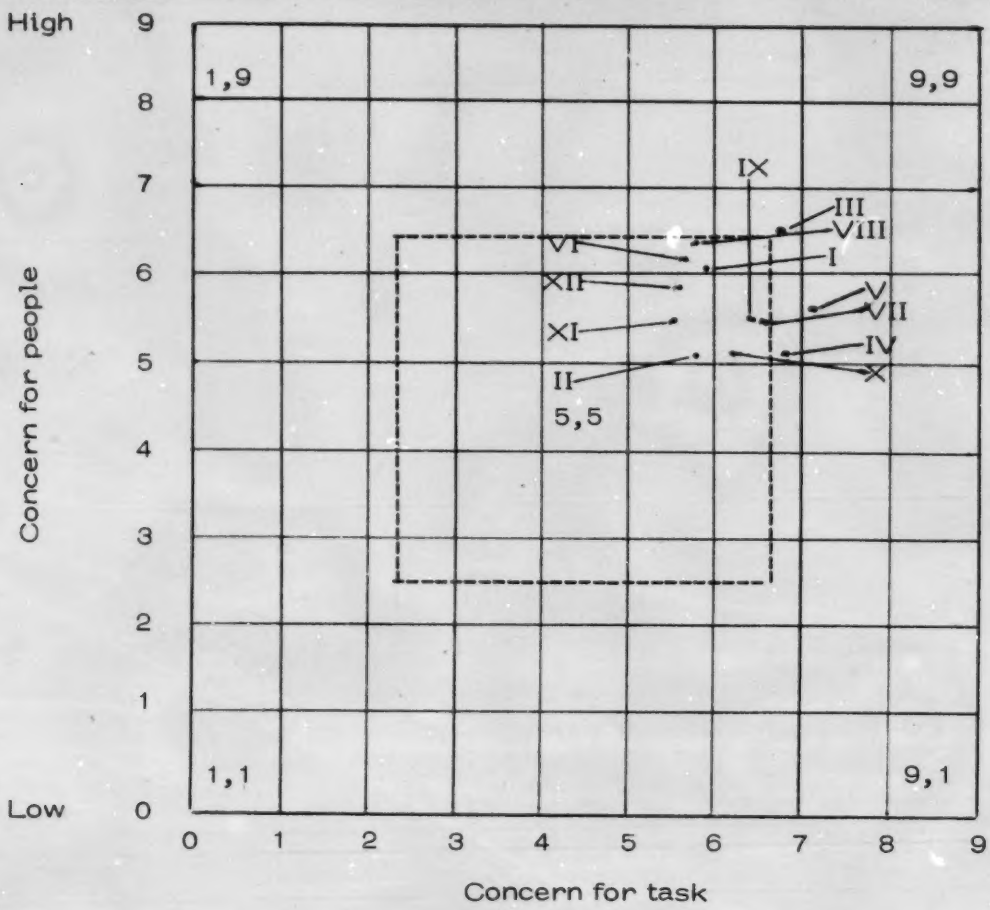

Figure 4. Leadership styles of Principals